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Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES
COOPERATING.

STATES RELATIONS SERVICE,
OFFICE OF EXTENSION WORK, SOUTH.
FARMERS' COOPERATIVE DEMONSTRATION WORK.
Washington, D. C.

SAFE FARMING, A BALANCED HUSBANDRY.

TO FARMERS, BANKERS AND BUSINESS MEN IN COTTON TERRITORY:

"WHENEVER THE GREED FOR A MONEY CROP UNBALANCES THE WISDOM OF HUSBANDRY, THE MONEY CROP IS A CURSE. WHEN IT STIMULATES THE GENERAL ECONOMY OF THE FARM IT IS THE PROFIT OF FARMING."

These words were written by the late Henry W. Grady, many years ago. They are true today. You are face to face with a great question. Are you going to permit the agriculture of the South to again become AN UNBALANCED HUSBANDRY or are we still to push forward toward SAFE FARMING?

High prices of certain farm products may tempt farmers to pursue an unwise course. Now is the time to take stock, to make an inventory and consider the situation.

Think back to 1914 before the war, when cotton was around thirteen cents a pound. How much did you pay for meat, flour and other food products at retail? Go back in the nineties when cotton was still lower in value and what did you pay at retail for food products? Then compare the present prices of food products with the present price of cotton; the test is the exchange value of cotton. How much will a pound of cotton purchase in food and feed products? By growing all cotton and exchanging it for a living you are simply swapping A HIGH PRICED PRODUCT produced by YOUR labor for a HIGH PRICED PRODUCT produced by the labor of the other fellow. When you follow SAFE FARMING, however, you produce your own food and feed at cost and sell your cotton for the other fellow's dollars.

The South has made great progress and has enjoyed wonderful prosperity in the past year because it produced so much of its own living.

What do we mean by SAFE FARMING? Here are the items which should constitute your program:

1. A home garden for every family on the farm. From one-tenth to one-fourth acre, well located, well tilled and tended as carefully as any other crop on the farm, planted in rotation to time the vegetable crops so as to have a continuous supply for the family table as many days in the year as possible. To this should be added one-fourth of an acre of potatoes, either Irish or sweet or both, to be used as food for the family. An acre of sorghum or sugar cane should be produced to supply the family with syrup if means can be found for grinding the cane and making the syrup.

2. Produce enough corn on each farm to last the family and the livestock with certainty for one year, with a little excess for safety.

3. Produce sufficient oats and other small grain to supplement the corn as food for one year with certainty, remembering that these small grains conserve the soil in winter and provide some grazing for livestock.

4. Produce the hay and forage crops necessary to supply the livestock on the farm for one year, with a little excess for safety, not forgetting the legumes which add fertility to the soil and produce the best hay.

5. Produce the necessary meat, eggs and milk for the family. The meat should be produced by increased attention to poultry and hogs because of the rapidity with which these can be produced. Every family should have at least two cows so that one can be in milk all of the time. A sufficient number of brood sows should be kept to produce the pork for the family, with some excess for sale. The number of laying hens should be increased and carefully tended to produce eggs and poultry for the table with a sufficient excess for sale. The average number of poultry per farm should be gradually increased to at least fifty. The livestock on the farm should be gradually increased as a whole so as to consume the otherwise waste products of the farm and make the unprofitable and untillable lands productive. This means attention to the breeding, care and feeding of poultry and hogs, beef cattle, milch cows, etc.

6. When the living has been amply provided for, grow cotton for the main money crop.

7. Plan to sell or exchange the surplus products of the garden, the orchard, the poultry, the livestock, the eggs and the feed crops, to cover the necessary running expenses of the farm and save the cotton as the real cash crop.

The fact that cotton has been up to eighteen and twenty cents per pound should not in any sense tempt farmers, merchants or bankers to depart in practice or in influence from this program. Are you going to play SAFE or gamble on the European war and bet that cotton will be high and food products low? ONE OF THE SERIOUS PROBLEMS OF THIS NATION TODAY IS THE PRODUCTION OF FOOD. AT THIS TIME NO MAN IN THE SOUTH CAN AFFORD TO BE TEMPTED TO REDUCE THE PRODUCTION OF FOOD AND FEED CROPS. RATHER SHOULD THEY BE INCREASED. IT IS THE ONLY SAFE PLAN.

The agricultural colleges of the Southern States, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture, are conducting, through the Extension Divisions and County Agents in every State, campaigns to sustain the production of food and feed crops in the South.

We need more of the three F's, FOOD, FEED, AND FERTILITY. Let us feed the people, feed the livestock and feed the soil. When we have done these three things, then raise such acreage in money crops as we have the labor to tend.

Yours very truly,

Bradford Knapp

Chief.

